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(54) **DATA COMPRESSION/EXPANSION ON A PLURALITY OF DIGITAL INFORMATION SIGNALS**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A data compression apparatus is proposed for data compressing at least a first and a second digital information signal $(L_0, L_1, L_2, \ldots, R_0, R_1, R_2, \ldots)$, each of the at least two digital information signals comprising subsequent samples. The apparatus comprises an input (1,2) for receiving the first and second digital information signal, a merging unit (6) for merging the samples of the first and second digital information signal after each other into one datastream so as to obtain a composite information signal $(L_0, R_0, L_1, R_1, L_2, R_2, \ldots)$. Further, a data compression unit (12) is available for data compressing the composite information signal so as to obtain a data compressed composite information signal and an output (16) is present for supplying the data compressed composite information signal.

22 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets